OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27
5010-108

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

Tolson
DeLoach
Mohr
Bishop
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

TO : Mr. Rosen

DATE: April 4, 1968

1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. McGowan
1 - Mr. McDonough
1 - Mr. Long 1 - Mr. Schmidt

FROM : C. L. McGowan

SUBJECT: UNKNOWN SUBJECT;
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING (DECEASED) - VICTIM
CIVIL RIGHTS

(O Mr. Lim)

ASAC Cliff Halter, Memphis Division, by telephone at 9:40 p.m., advised of developments in the shooting by a sniper of Dr. Martin Luther King. King was shot shortly before 7 p.m., April 4, 1968, as he stood on the balcony of his second floor room at the Lorraine Hotel and Motel, 406 Mulberry Street, Memphis. Witnesses heard a shot, saw King fall, and it is believed the shot came from a low class hotel across the street. Drs. J. N. Barrasso and Frederick Giora, St. Joseph's Hospital, Memphis, advised our Agents Dr. King was pronounced dead at 7:05 p.m. Death was caused by a bullet which tore major neck vessels and severed the spinal cord at the root of the neck.

A Deputy Sheriff patrolling routinely in the area observed a young white male throw a rifle and bag on the sidewalk and keep running. Police recovered a Remington Game Master, Model 760, with a scope sight containing one 30.06 shell. The bag recovered by police contains a box of Peters cartridges, binoculars, and various items of clothing.

Agents are to fly all items of evidence to Washington, D.C., tonight for Laboratory examination. As far as known, one bullet was fired and the spent bullet has not been recovered as yet and is believed to be in King's body.

ASAC Halter mentioned there has been sporadic looting in the City of Memphis. News reports reflected a curfew has been imposed on the City of Memphis and 4,000 National Guard troops have been ordered into the city.

Assistant Director Conrad was advised and will arrange stand-by coverage for Laboratory examination.

2 APR 11 1968

Identification Division, was advised and has two latent fingerprint men standing by on duty.

DAS:hw
(7)

CONTINUED - OVER

SEE ADDENDUM PAGE TWO...

At 10:20 p.m., ASAC Halter advised two suspects were picked up by Memphis police when they were found to be changing clothes in a "garage" one or two blocks from the scene of the shooting. The suspects are Manual Marcus Levin, white male, born 7-2-45, who claims to be a civil rights worker and a law student at the University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi; the other is Alex Jay Hurder, white male, born 4-20-45, resides [redacted] and claims to be a civil rights worker and a law student at Duke University. Bureau indices were checked and no direct references to these individuals were found and references on variations being reviewed. Identification Division advised they have no record of fingerprints in civil or criminal files.

The shot is now believed to have been fired from a bathroom window at 420 South Main Street, Memphis, about 100 yards from where King was standing. Three witnesses who reportedly saw the shooting are being interviewed by Memphis Agents.

Senior Resident Agent, Nashville, has been in touch with the Governor of Tennessee who has called out the National Guard.

Memphis anticipates forwarding evidence by plane departing Memphis 12:25 a.m., or 12:30 a.m., 4-5-68, arriving Dulles Airport 4:05 a.m., or 4:17 a.m., and will advise when definitely arranged.

ADDENDUM: REL:cs 4/5/68

At 11:20 p.m., ASAC Halter advised at this point they have three witnesses interviewed, have determined the serial number of the rifle to be 461476, a Remington Gamemaster Model 760. ASAC Halter was instructed to immediately call the New Haven Office to have tracings of this rifle instituted. ASAC Halter further stated that according to the news releases one Charles Stephens was a witness to this case and ASAC Halter stated that he would make arrangements to interview this person, if not already done. ASAC Halter also was instructed to obtain fingerprints of both suspects Levin and Hurder, along with major case prints. ASAC Halter was instructed to maintain the chain of evidence, to obtain copies of any autopsy reports and to . .

ADDENDUM CONTINUED - OVER

ADDENDUM CONTINUED:

particularly try to obtain the bullet from the body of victim. ASAC Halter was reminded again of the paramount importance of keeping the Bureau advised on all developments and to particularly alert Charlotte and Jackson Offices to obtain information regarding the suspects, if this matter works out.

At 11:47 p.m., ASAC Halter stated that reservations had been made for Agent [redacted] Flight 610 of Braniff Airways, departing Memphis at 12:25 a.m. and to arrive at Dulles Airport, Washington, D. C., at 4:05 a.m. 4/5/68. ASAC Halter stated that [redacted] will have with him all the evidence as gathered to date.

At 12:05 a.m., 4/5/68, [redacted] of the Laboratory was notified of the above and [redacted] of the Laboratory was advised of this matter.

At 12:15 a.m., 4/5/68, SAC Jensen of Memphis called and stated that he wanted to advise that he recovered three $20 bills from the landlady, and one of these $20 bills is a bill given to the landlady by the suspect. He stated that also included in the evidence would be a rifle in a box, the bullet from the body of King, one empty cartridge as well as bullets in a box. SAC Jensen also stated that in consideration of elimination points from any evidence submitted, the following should be considered as elimination: SA [redacted] SAC Jensen and Inspector [redacted] Memphis Police Department. SAC Jensen further stated that a blanket would also be sent to the Laboratory which contains particles of mud. SAC Jensen advised that he would desire that all possible examinations be conducted of the evidence submitted in order to develop any suspects of any investigative aids possible.

At 12:25 a.m., [redacted] of the Laboratory, at 12:35 a.m., [redacted] of the Latent Fingerprint Section and [redacted] of the Latent Fingerprint Section were all advised of the information furnished by SAC Jensen and of his specific desires concerning examination of evidence.

At 1:05 a.m., on 4/5/68, SAC Jensen advised that they have determined that a person fired a shot from the window of a bathroom approximately 205 feet from where victim was standing. They have conducted neighborhood investigation concerning this and have determined that one John Willard rented a room in the same house that shot came from, and upon paying landlady $8.50 for a week's rent she recalled his name as

ADDENDUM CONTINUED:

John Willard. SAC Jensen advised that Willard lives at 420 South Main Street in Memphis. He stated that they are continuing to pursue every angle of this investigation and will keep the Bureau informed. At 1:28 a.m., SAC Johnson of Chicago called and stated that the informant who would be very helpful in a possible solution of this matter, is out of pocket, but they are endeavoring to try to locate him with the express purpose of recommending that he proceed to Memphis for possible solution of the case. SAC Johnson stated that before any of this is done, however, he will transmit a teletype to the Bureau for clearance.

At 2:15 a.m., SAC Jensen advised that he is extremely interested in the serial number of the scope as well as the manufacturer and of any information concerning the clamps used. SAC Jensen stated that nothing further has developed as yet. He stated that Agent [redacted] is definitely airborne as of this minute en route to Washington, D. C.

At 3:50 a.m., SAC Jensen advised that nothing new has transpired in this matter, however, they have determined that the person who is a suspect is possibly aged 27-35, a white male and 5' 11" tall. He also stated that in the contents belonging to the suspect is a bar of soap (Cashmere Bouquet) from the Friendship Inn Motel, and also a couple of maps. He stated that they have also found articles of clothing which contain a laundry ticket, and they are presently checking this out.

At 4:32 a.m., the Identification Division advised that they have located a record for one John Hubeart Willard, [redacted], also known as John Hubbard Willard, [redacted] The second and last entry records that fingerprints were contributed by Sheriff's Office, Pontotoc, Miss., on 6/25/58, [redacted] The Identification Division also advised that they have advised Memphis of this information and Memphis is in receipt of the arrest record as well as photographs of Willard. Identification Division advised that a description of this individual would be as white male, height 5'11", weight 150-155, [redacted], brown hair, dark green eyes, ruddy complexion and medium build.

ADDENDUM CONTINUED:

At 4:43 a.m., SAC Jensen also advised of this information record in the Identification Division concerning Willard, and he was advised that the Bureau would immediately call Jackson to thoroughly and exhaustively check this matter out concerning Willard at Pontotoc, Mississippi.

At 4:50 a.m., SAC Moore was advised of this information record in the Identification Division files and SAC Moore was instructed to immediately determine the whereabouts of Willard and also all possible avenues to thoroughly check this matter out to determine if Willard can be a suspect. SAC Moore stated he would immediately do this and he would, of course, keep the Bureau advised.

At 5:16 a.m., [redacted] of the Laboratory called to advise that the evidence as delivered by SA [redacted] is now in possession of the Laboratory, and they are commencing to process this material.